

Monday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians,

### Middle Years Update No. 5



#### Site Progress

It is a hive of activity at the site with painters, plumbers, electricians and carpenters busily working on the building. The plastering is being completed at present and tiles in wet areas are about to be fixed. Orders have been placed for whitegoods and next week we will sign off on furniture for classrooms and break out spaces. I have started ordering resources for some of the subjects e.g. maths resources, P.E. and science equipment and art supplies.



## Curriculum

In the last update I shared specific information about the eight MYP subjects. There are two other components of the curriculum that make up the MYP – interdisciplinary learning and the personal project.

### Interdisciplinary Learning

Interdisciplinary learning can take place between different subject groups and between different disciplines within a subject group to encourage broader perspectives on complex issues and deeper levels of analysis and synthesis. Interdisciplinary connections must be meaningful.

In the MYP, interdisciplinary learning is the process by which students come to understand bodies of knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines and then integrate them to create a new understanding. Students demonstrate this by bringing together concepts, methods or forms of communication to explain a phenomenon, solve a problem, create a product or raise a new question in ways that would have been unlikely through a single discipline.

MYP schools must engage students in at least one collaboratively planned interdisciplinary unit in each year of the MYP in order to integrate knowledge and skills from two or more subject groups in an interdisciplinary manner.

The aims of interdisciplinary learning in the MYP are to:

- Develop a deeper understanding of learning skills and apply them in meaningful contexts
- Integrate conceptual learning, ways of knowing and methods of inquiry from multiple disciplines
- Inquire into compelling issues, ideas and challenges by creating products or explaining phenomena
- Reflect on and communicate understanding of the interdisciplinary learning process
- Experience the excitement of intellectual discovery – including insights into how disciplines complement and challenge one another.

There is no set number of interdisciplinary learning hours in each year of the MYP, but MYP subject-group teachers are responsible for developing meaningful and ongoing interdisciplinary teaching and learning opportunities throughout the programme.

While the PYP has a transdisciplinary approach, where learning is not confined by traditional subjects, but is supported and enriched by them; the MYP moves to an interdisciplinary approach. Students are still provided with opportunities to explore the links between the subjects, but also spend learning time focusing on specific disciplines. This prepares them for their Diploma which has a disciplinary approach and subjects are assessed individually.

### Personal Project

Following on from the Exhibition, which students participate in their final year of the PYP, students in the Middle Years will complete a personal project at the end of MYP 5 (Year 10).

The MYP personal project is a student-centred and age-appropriate practical exploration in which students consolidate their learning throughout the programme. This long-term project is designed as an independent learning experience of approximately 25 hours. The personal project formally assesses students' ATL skills for self-management, research, communication, critical and creative thinking, and collaboration.

The personal project encourages students to practice and strengthen their ATL skills, to connect classroom learning engagements with personal experience, and to develop their own interests for lifelong learning.

MYP year 5 students must successfully complete the externally moderated personal project to be eligible for IB MYP course results and the IB MYP certificate.

The aims of the MYP project is to encourage and enable students to:

- Participate in a sustained, self-directed inquiry within a global context
- Generate creative new insights and develop deeper understandings through in-depth investigation
- Demonstrate the skills, attitudes and knowledge required to complete a project over an extended period of time
- Communicate effectively in a variety of situations
- Demonstrate responsible action through, or as a result of, learning
- Appreciate the process of learning and take pride in their accomplishments.

Students must identify a global context for their MYP project to establish its relevance and significance. The following **global contexts** direct learning towards independent inquiry:

- Identities and relationships
- Orientation in space and time
- Personal and cultural expression
- Scientific and technical innovation
- Globalization and sustainability
- Fairness and development.

The MYP personal project involves students in a wide range of student-planned learning activities that extend knowledge and understanding and develop important academic and personal skills.

Students address personal project objectives through:

- The **process** they follow
- The **product or outcome** they create
- The **report or presentation** they make that explains what they have done and learned.

Students document their thinking, research process and development of their initial ideas by developing an outline of a challenging but manageable goal. Example goals include the development of original works of art, models, business plans, campaigns, blueprints, investigative studies, scientific experiments, performances, field work, narrative essays, courses of study or learning engagements, films, computer programmes and many other forms of work.

Students document their project work in the **process journal**. This learning strategy helps students record and learn from their work, and it promotes academic honesty. As a record of progress, journals can take many forms and can be recorded in a variety of media. They represent an evolving record of plans, ideas and accomplishments. The process journal provides a repository for essential reflections on learning and formative feedback on students' work.

Extracts from the journal, which demonstrate achievement in all criteria, are submitted as appendices of the report or presentation at the conclusion of the project.

The personal project report explains the project process in a concise and succinct form. The report contains a formal bibliography and a statement of academic honesty.

Each student has a personal project supervisor who provides guidance and formative feedback. Projects are assessed by their supervisors against these published criteria, and schools conduct internal standardization to ensure consistent understanding of the criteria and student performance.

The external validation of personal project grades is mandatory for all MYP schools ending in year 5. The IB moderates a sample of personal projects from each school, adjusting grades as necessary to ensure the application of rigorous and reliable international standards.



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In the next edition of the update I will share information about 'SALT', our well-being programme, which will be specifically developed for our students.

Planned MYP updates:

- October 22<sup>nd</sup> Focus on SALT and extra-curricular programme
- November 8<sup>th</sup> Staffing update and timetable information

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michelle Cafini".

**Dr Michelle Cafini**  
Head of College